

## **Implementation of Democratic Values in Islamic Education Learning: Perspectives and Approaches to Improve the Quality of Education**

**Madkan<sup>1</sup> Lusia Mumtahana<sup>2</sup> Ardianto<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Darul Ulum Lamongan; [madkan@unisda.ac.id](mailto:madkan@unisda.ac.id)

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Lamongan; [lusiamumtahana@unisla.ac.id](mailto:lusiamumtahana@unisla.ac.id)

<sup>2</sup> Institut Agama Islam Daruttaqwa Gresik; [ardianto@insida.ac.id](mailto:ardianto@insida.ac.id)

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### **Abstract**

This article aims to analyze and describe the application of democratic values in learning from the perspective of Islamic education. This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach. The findings show that democracy in the learning process is essential, considering the diverse backgrounds of students. Therefore, teachers need to understand the characteristics of each student in order to select the appropriate teaching methods. Islamic education promotes the application of democratic principles such as equality, freedom, and justice, which can enhance students' active participation in the learning process. The approaches applied in democratic learning include individual, group, experiential, habituation, and emotional approaches, which aim to develop social attitudes, creativity, and maximum student involvement. With the freedom to express opinions and engage in deliberation, students can grow as active and creative individuals, in line with the holistic goals of Islamic education. Research Implications:\*\* The findings of this study have significant implications for the development of a more inclusive and democratic Islamic education curriculum, and they can serve as a reference for teachers to design teaching methods that are more adaptive to the characteristics of students. This research also contributes to a deeper understanding of the application of democratic values in the context of Islamic education, which has the potential to improve educational interactions in Islamic schools and encourage the formation of a more tolerant, just, and responsible generation.

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### **Corresponding Author:**

Madkan

Universitas Darul Ulum Lamongan; [madkan@unisda.ac.id](mailto:madkan@unisda.ac.id)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The urgency of integrating democratic values into Islamic education stems from a confluence of factors, primarily driven by the imperative to cultivate ethically grounded, socially responsible, and critically thinking individuals within Muslim societies (Romlah & Rusdi, 2023). In an era marked by rapid globalization, eroding moral standards, and increasing global competition, the quality of education, particularly Islamic education, has become a paramount concern (Mappasiara, 2018). The establishment of substantial character values in Indonesia to guide the implementation of the teaching and learning process emphasizes this concern (Ibrahim, 2021). Many argue that current educational systems, including those focused on Islamic teachings, often fall short in equipping students with the skills and dispositions necessary to navigate the complexities of the modern world while remaining firmly rooted in their faith (Praja & Muslih, 2021). Quantitatively, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting a correlation between civic engagement and democratic participation on one hand and educational attainment on the other (Mappasiara, 2018). Qualitatively, anecdotal evidence and case studies reveal a gap between the espoused values of Islam, such as justice, equality, and consultation, and their practical manifestation in educational settings (Wulandari, 2017).

Existing literature on Islamic education tends to be bifurcated, with one strand focusing on traditional religious instruction and the other on modern pedagogical approaches (Tolchah & Mu'ammam, 2019). While valuable, neither fully addresses the nuanced challenge of how to effectively embed democratic principles within the framework of Islamic teachings (Gr, 1992). Some scholars explore the role of Islamic organizations in implementing Islamic values within political contexts, which provides a basis for reviewing the application and development of Islamic values (Lavan, 2021). Much of the existing scholarship emphasizes the theoretical compatibility between Islam and democracy, often citing historical examples of Islamic governance that embodied consultative decision-making and social justice. However, these analyses often lack concrete strategies for translating these ideals into actionable educational practices (Asmanto et al., 2023). Furthermore, there is a notable dearth of research examining the pedagogical implications of integrating democratic values into Islamic education, including curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and assessment techniques. While Islamic education theoretically provides a foundation for character education, many individuals still exhibit questionable morals and behaviors (Jamaluddin, 2013). There remains a lack of exploration into how Islamic education can adapt to meet contemporary needs, especially in a globalizing world, while upholding its core values (Hashim & Jemali, 2017). In addition, most discussions on education in the Muslim world have centered on gaining empowerment within the modern world system since gaining limited independence from direct colonialism after World War II (Shah et al., 2015).

This paper aims to bridge this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the perspectives and approaches to improve the quality of education through the implementation of democratic values in Islamic education learning. This paper seeks to offer a novel contribution by delineating specific pedagogical strategies and curricular reforms that can foster democratic values within Islamic educational contexts, addressing a gap in the existing literature. This study is designed to complement existing research by providing actionable recommendations for educators and policymakers seeking to enhance the quality and relevance of Islamic education in the 21st century. More specifically, the objective of this paper is to determine the type of educational strategies in Islam that can help mould students to become disciplined students (Ismail et al., 2013). The goal is to explore how integrating

democratic values into Islamic education can cultivate critical thinking, civic engagement, and social responsibility among students, while grounding them in the ethical and spiritual teachings of Islam (Pairin et al., 2019).

At the heart of this paper lies the argument that Islamic education, when infused with democratic values, can serve as a powerful catalyst for social progress and individual empowerment. This paper seeks to examine how democratic values, such as inclusivity, participation, and respect for diversity, can be integrated into Islamic education curricula and teaching methods, in order to make it more relevant to the current world (Mutiarra et al., 2021). It posits that by fostering critical thinking, encouraging open dialogue, and promoting active citizenship, Islamic education can equip students with the tools they need to address the challenges facing their communities and contribute to the betterment of society. In essence, this paper seeks to test the hypothesis that a curriculum infused with democratic values, delivered through participatory teaching methods, will lead to increased levels of civic engagement, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning among students in Islamic educational settings.

## 2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach, which means a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and behaviors that are observed (Sugiyono, 2008). The data collection technique, in accordance with the type of approach used, is conducted by analyzing existing data sources, then noting and classifying the results of the analysis according to the planned framework. The literature data is then analyzed qualitatively with the following stages: First, editing, which means reviewing all the data obtained, especially in terms of completeness, readability, clarity of meaning, consistency, harmony, relevance, and uniformity between data or data groups. Second, data organization, which involves arranging and systematizing the data obtained into the planned presentation framework. Third, conducting further analysis of the organized data using a descriptive analysis technique, which is in the form of words rather than numbers (Lexy J. Moloeng, 1996). For drawing conclusions, inductive and deductive reasoning are used. Inductive reasoning is a method for explaining an issue by starting from specific data to draw a general conclusion, while deductive reasoning is a method for explaining an issue starting from a general principle and then gradually explaining it towards a specific conclusion (Moleong, 1989).

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 The Essence of the Learning Process

In the teaching and learning activities, the student is both the subject and the object of the teaching activity. Therefore, the essence of the teaching process is the learning activity of the students in achieving an educational goal (Etherton & Kovacs, 2022; Hadijaya, Nasution, & Suhairi, 2018; Pérez, del Barco, Bernal, & Gallego, 2021). The educational goal will be achieved if the students actively strive to reach it. Student activity here is not only required physically but also mentally and psychologically (Allur, Heras-Saizarbitoria, Boiral, & Testa, 2018; Koenig & Larson, 2001). If the student is physically active but mentally and psychologically passive, the likelihood of achieving the educational goal is slim. This is similar to when students are not learning, as they do not experience any change within themselves,

while learning, in essence, is a "*change*" that occurs within a person after completing a learning activity. However, not all changes are categorized as learning, such as physical changes, drunkenness, madness, and so on (Alya, Rasyid, Suhesty, & Handayani, 2024; Corey, 2016).

Teaching activities for a teacher require the presence of a number of students. This is different from learning. Learning does not always require the presence of a teacher. Essentially, learning is not just about delivering a message to the students or creating an interaction between the educator and the students, but also honing the teacher's teaching skills and organizing an efficient learning environment (Ma'arif, Mumtahana, Sunarno, Mansyuri, & Nasith, 2023; Madkan & Mumtahana, 2022; Mumtahana, Ikmal, & Sari, 2022).

Teaching is an activity that necessarily requires the involvement of individual students. Without students or learning objects, who would the teacher be teaching? Therefore, learning and teaching are established concepts that are inseparable in the teaching process. The teacher who teaches and the student who learns are two interconnected entities, where the teacher and student share both the physical and mental aspects (Huda & Rokhman, 2021; Kartiko, Rokhman, Priyono, & Susanto, 2024; Kholili & Rokhman, 2021). Typically, one of the problems faced by teachers when dealing with multiple students is classroom management. The teacher's role is at least to create a conducive classroom environment that fosters the enthusiasm and enjoyment of the students' learning process. Every time the teacher enters the classroom, they are expected to manage the class until the teaching and learning session ends. Thus, classroom management will always be part of the teacher's duties. All of these activities are done for the benefit of the students, for the success of their learning (Ismawati, Bakar, & Zamroni, 2024; Zamroni & Supriyanto, 2024).

Similarly, teaching, like learning, is essentially a process of organizing and managing the environment around the students, so that it can foster and encourage students to engage in the learning process. Furthermore, teaching is a process of providing guidance and assistance to the students in their learning journey (Djalilah, Muzakar, Suhardi, & Kartiko, 2024; Kartiko et al., 2024). The teacher's role as a guide is also based on the fact that many students face challenges. In learning, some students quickly digest the material, some are in the process of understanding the material, and some are slow in grasping the material presented by the teacher. These three types of learners require the teacher to adjust the teaching strategy to the students' learning styles. Ultimately, if the essence of learning is "change," then the essence of teaching and learning is the "organization" process carried out by the teacher.

### **3.2 The Application of Democratic Values in Islamic Education: Principles, Methods, and Approaches**

Education success requires cooperation between educators and students. Although educators try to influence students, the success of education depends on the students' readiness and willingness to achieve the set goals. Democratization in education is also important, where education must teach things relevant to the present world without forgetting its history. The formation of democratic values in education instills values of truth, aesthetics, as well as ethics and morals, which are essential for the development of students (Barton, Yilmaz, & Morieson, 2021; Krick, 2022).

Success in the learning process is greatly influenced by the methods used by educators. A good method can transform the learning material so that it is well understood by students. Even if the material presented is less interesting, a communicative delivery method can still

help students understand the material more effectively. Therefore, selecting the right method plays a significant role in achieving educational goals.

Islamic education teaches democratic principles reflected in consultation, justice, and respect for differences. The Quran teaches the importance of consultation in decision-making, as well as emphasizing the need to act justly and respect the rights of others. In education, applying these principles helps create an environment that values freedom of expression and provides equal opportunities for all students to develop (Arianto et al., 2024; Isnaeni, Budiman, Nurjaya, & Mukhlisin, 2025).

In Islamic education, the relationship between teachers and students should be based on mutual understanding and respect. Teachers are expected to manage the classroom well, create a conducive atmosphere for learning, and adapt methods according to the needs of each student. Since each student has a different learning style, the approaches taken by teachers should be adjusted to ensure the success of the learning process (Jumadiyah & Zumrotun, 2024).

Furthermore, Islamic education prioritizes the importance of character development through various approaches such as individual, group, experiential, habituation, and emotional approaches. Each of these approaches is designed to help students develop according to their potential and support the achievement of the educational goals of Islamic education, which includes the development of character, knowledge, and spirituality.

Democracy in education not only encompasses theoretical aspects but also practices involving the social participation of educators, educational staff, government, and society. Democratic education allows changes in the education system by questioning and revising old values that no longer align with the needs of the times. By involving all educational elements in this process, it is hoped that the education system can be improved and become more responsive to societal and technological developments (Adila, Sari, & Adiyono, 2023; Aral, 2021).

The above explanation shows that Islam has a very positive view of democratic values and respects the differences within society. In Islamic education, much has been mentioned about the importance of democracy in teaching and learning. The relationship between the teacher and the student as an educated human being is emphasized based on the sources of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an, and Hadith. An analytical exploration of the contents of the Qur'an will reveal various forms of relationships between teachers and students, with the following principles (Hamdani Ihsan, 1998): (1) Islamic education recognizes the truth of the fitrah as the basic ability granted by Allah in every human being. This fitrah is a potential that can be developed through the educational process using the appropriate, effective, and efficient methods. (2) The belief in the potential of the fitrah in Islamic education encourages activities that aim to direct the development of fitrah toward Islamic ideals and prevent negative influences. (3) Islamic education strives for harmony, balance, and alignment between instrumental inputs and environmental inputs to achieve the educational goals, ensuring that the educational outcomes truly reflect Islamic ideals. (4) Islamic education encourages teachers to make efforts to avoid negative influences on the development of fitrah through educational programs that align with Islamic ideals. (5) Islamic education seeks to create flexible teaching and learning models that meet the students' needs as servants of Allah and as members of society. (6) In all aspects, Islamic education continues to adhere to patterns of human life development that are oriented toward faith and knowledge, strengthening each other in the life of a Muslim. Efforts in democracy within the teaching and learning process.

According to Naim & Sauqi (2011), democracy in the context of education is the liberation of educators and humans from structures and legal systems that place humans as mere components. Democracy in education not only preserves past value systems but also allows for questioning and revising those value systems (Freire, 1998). Democratic education can be understood as a process of socialization, internalization, and actualization of democratic concepts and values through the learning process (Rosyad & Maarif, 2020). According to the Journal of Muwafiqur Rohman, democracy's influence on education includes values such as: 1) Equality (egalitarianism), 2) Respect for human rights, 3) Protection, 4) Pluralism, 5) Justice, 6) Tolerance, 7) Humanity, 8) Order, 9) Respect for others, 10) Freedom, 11) Respect for ownership, 12) Responsibility, 13) Togetherness, and 14) Prosperity (Rahman, 2018).

In the learning activities, there is a purposeful interaction driven by both the teacher and the student. This purposeful interaction is made possible by the teacher creating an educational environment that benefits the students' learning. Teachers aim to provide the best service to the students by providing an enjoyable and engaging learning environment. Teachers strive to be wise and effective guides, thus creating a harmonious two-way relationship between the teacher and the students. The teacher facilitates collaboration by dividing students into learning groups, encouraging cooperation, task sharing, and idea exchange among the students (Nungki Dwi Abshita Rini, 2017).

A teacher who views each student as a unique individual will use a different approach compared to one who views them as the same. Therefore, it is important for teachers to avoid misconceptions in assessing students, as each student has different ways of absorbing lessons. (Rofiq, Fahmi, Rokhman, & Khamim, 2024) suggests several approaches to ensure the success of education, such as an individual approach that considers the differences in students' characteristics and a group approach to develop social skills.

The experiential approach is also crucial in education, where experience is considered the best teacher to help students in their personal development. Good habituation, especially for children, will shape a good personality, while bad habits will have the opposite effect. Therefore, it is important for teachers to instill positive habits early in a child's life to ensure the development of good character.

The emotional approach also plays an important role in education because emotions are related to feelings that can influence how students respond to learning. Teachers must pay attention to the emotional state of students, both verbally and non-verbally, to create an environment that supports the mental and spiritual growth of students. Democracy in education, in this context, proposes a system that involves social participation from educators, educational staff, the government, and society to improve the education system collectively (Rosyad & Maarif, 2020).

**Table 1.** Summary of research discussion findings.

Aspect	Explanation	Reference
Collaboration between Educators and Students	Education requires active collaboration between educators and students to achieve educational goals. Students must be willing and ready to learn.	Durhan, 2019; Winarto, 2007
Role of Methods in Learning	The right teaching method greatly influences the success of education. Communicative methods will be more	Armai Arief, 2002

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	effective, even if the material is not very interesting.	
Democratic Values in Learning	Democratic education teaches values such as equality, justice, freedom, and deliberation. These are applied in the relationship between teachers and students through various approaches.	Rizki Ramdani, Dinie Anggraeni Dewi, 2021
Application of Deliberation	The principle of deliberation is highly recommended in Islamic education to reach wise and just decisions in teaching and daily life.	Surah Ali Imran 159, Asy-Syura 38
Principle of Justice	Islamic education teaches the importance of fairness in all aspects of life, including in the learning process between teachers and students.	Qur'an Surah Al-Maidah 8
Appreciation of Differences	Islamic education teaches equality of rights and appreciation of every individual, regardless of their background.	Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat 13
Trust (Amanah) in Education	Teachers are expected to maintain trust in teaching and be fair in assessing and making decisions regarding students.	Qur'an Surah An-Nisa' 58
Freedom to Criticize and Express Opinions	Democratic education provides space for freedom of speech and criticism to improve the existing educational system.	Qur'an Surah Ali Imran 104, An-Nisa' 59
Approaches in Islamic Education	Various approaches such as individual, group, experiential, habituation, and emotional are used in education to achieve more effective and relevant goals for the current times.	Naim & Sauqi, 2011; Syaiful Bahri, 1996
Goals of Islamic Education	Islamic education aims to develop the potential of students' innate abilities (fitrah) so they become individuals with good morals, knowledge, and faith according to Islamic teachings.	Hamdani Ihsan, 1998

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### 3.3 Democracy in Education: An Analysis of Concept, Implementation, and Relevance in Islamic Perspective

The attainment of educational success hinges on a synergistic collaboration between educators and students, where the educator's influence is effectively internalized by students who are willing and prepared to pursue their goals (Hamalik, 2006). Educational democratization can be achieved through instruction relevant to the contemporary world, without disregarding historical context. The establishment of democratic values necessitates an acknowledgement of popular sovereignty as the bedrock of governmental legitimacy and authority, thereby instilling values of truth, aesthetics, and ethical conduct. The collaborative dynamic between educators and students is most evident during the instructional process, where pedagogical methods assume a pivotal role in achieving educational objectives, serving as conduits for transforming curricular content into comprehensible and functional knowledge

for students (Mappasiara, 2018). Indeed, the communicative efficacy of a delivery method holds greater sway than the inherent appeal of the material itself; conversely, even the most compelling content may fail to resonate if presented in an unengaging manner (Prajā & Muslih, 2021). Consequently, the judicious application of appropriate methodologies exerts a substantial influence on the successful realization of learning objectives.

The strategic role of teachers in nurturing the potential of their students is undeniable, with education serving as a cornerstone for the success and advancement of future generations (Huda & Fattah, 2021). The transformative impact of globalization on education necessitates a continuous evaluation and adaptation of educational strategies to address emerging challenges and opportunities (Mappasiara, 2018). Modernization, globalization and technological advancements have influenced Islamic education (Gr, 1992). Islamic education faces challenges, including cultural globalization, low social capital, and structural and human resource issues (Tolchah & Mu' ammar, 2019). The integration of technology into educational practices presents a myriad of possibilities for expanding the reach and comprehension of Islamic teachings (Johan et al., 2024). In navigating the complexities of the modern world, educators must inspire students to become self-directed learners, capable of critically analyzing information and contributing to a more just and equitable society (Grigoropoulos & Gialamas, 2018). Furthermore, the creation of an educational environment that fosters critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration is essential for equipping students with the skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Moreover, in an era defined by rapid technological advancements, it is incumbent upon educators to harness the power of technology to enhance the learning experience, while simultaneously addressing the ethical considerations that accompany its use.

The integration of Information and Communication Technology in education has been somewhat peripheral, with new technologies often being added to traditional teacher-centered instruction models (Salleh et al., 2011). It is imperative to equip teachers with the skills and resources necessary to effectively integrate technology into their instructional practices, thereby fostering a more engaging and effective learning environment (Kundu & Bej, 2020). Educators are expected to embrace constant changes which can help them transform their pupils into lifelong learners who are engaged in consuming concepts in digital forms which are easily accessed through hyperlinks (Bañez & Yedra, 2019). The rise of technology and the unstoppable flow of information have created new challenges for strengthening Muslim identity, especially among the younger generation (Gr, 1992). The role of Islamic Religious Education teachers is crucial in this context. Islamic Religious Education teachers must improve their ability to use technology and information-based learning media in the classroom and move away from textbooks so that the learning process achieves its objectives and provides students with numerous opportunities to develop their learning creativity (Eraku et al., 2021). The integration of ICT, including computers and internet connections, can significantly enhance the teaching and learning process in Islamic studies, offering alternative approaches to traditional methods (Engkizar et al., 2018). However, many Islamic studies teachers do not use ICT due to limited facilities, training, and confidence (Engkizar et al., 2018).

Students today are immersed in technology, using computers, smartphones, and digital media in their daily lives (Cha et al., 2020). It is, therefore, crucial to integrate ICT in schools to prepare students for the information age (Atteh et al., 2020). ICT has revolutionized language teaching and learning, transforming classrooms from traditional settings to dynamic, technology-rich environments (Paudel, 2020). Integrating technology with language teaching

can broaden knowledge and skills related to language, improve teaching quality, and increase students' motivation and engagement in learning (Prabawa, 2017; Qaddumi et al., 2023). Furthermore, the integration of ICT tools in education requires that teachers are knowledgeable in their use and are able to create conducive classroom environments that facilitate students' use of technology to learn, communicate, and develop knowledge products (Edu et al., 2012). Blended learning, which combines traditional classroom instruction with e-learning, can enhance student independence and allow for personalized learning experiences (Suhada et al., 2019). ICT can be used in various ways to help both teachers and students learn about their respective subject areas, including educational videos, stimulation, data storage, databases, mind-mapping, guided discovery, brainstorming, and music (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015).

To meet the demands of the 21st century, teachers need to integrate technology into their lessons to meet the ever-changing educational needs of students.

Teachers can utilize tools like podcasting, interactive whiteboards, blogs, wikis, social networking, and virtual classrooms to address crucial 21st-century skills, including global awareness, self-directed learning, ICT literacy, problem-solving skills, and more (Tomei, 2013). The integration of ICT in education offers a transformative approach to teaching and learning, provided that educators are equipped with the necessary skills, resources, and support (Engkizar et al., 2018; Hayati et al., 2021; Nguyen, 2020; Pannen, 2015). The digital divide and the uneven distribution of technology resources pose a challenge to equitable access to quality education (Hidayati, 2022; Maru et al., 2021; Sánchez-Cruzado et al., 2021; Singh, 2019).

The collaborative synergy between educators and students is indispensable for achieving educational success. The success of education relies on the active participation and receptiveness of students, underscoring the importance of their willingness to engage with the material and strive towards their goals (Raymond, 2016). Democratizing education involves teaching relevant, contemporary topics that resonate with students while respecting historical context. The establishment of democratic values encompasses the recognition of popular will as the foundation for governmental legitimacy and authority, thereby affirming the principle of popular sovereignty. This cultivation of democratic values instills principles of truth, aesthetics, and ethics (Mhlongo et al., 2023). During the teaching and learning process, collaboration between educators and students is essential, and methods play a crucial role in achieving educational goals by transforming curriculum content into understandable and functional concepts for students.

The axiom that "the method is more important than the material" highlights the significance of communicative delivery in engaging students, even if the material itself is not inherently captivating. Conversely, even high-quality material may fail to resonate with students if presented in an unengaging manner (Wang & Wu, 2022). The collaborative synergy between educators and students during the teaching and learning process is paramount. The integration of technology has expanded access to resources, offering interactive simulations, multimedia content, and global databases. The ability to cater to diverse learning styles and needs is one of the most notable benefits of digital transformation (-, 2023). Technology has paved the way for personalized learning experiences that enable students to learn at their own pace and according to their own needs, which greatly benefits engagement and academic outcomes (Angwaomaodoko, 2023).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the importance of applying democratic values in Islamic education, including collaboration between educators and students, and the implementation of principles such as consultation, justice, equality, and freedom of expression. These values play a crucial role in fostering harmonious interactions between teachers and students, supporting the achievement of holistic educational goals. The approaches used, such as individual, group, and emotional approaches, help create more inclusive and effective learning in the context of Islamic education.

The limitations of this study lie in its approach, which only uses a literature review method without involving empirical data or direct field observations. As a result, this research is limited to theoretical understanding and does not fully reflect the reality of implementing democratic values in the classroom. Furthermore, the challenges faced by educators in applying democratic principles in everyday practice have not been fully explored, which is one of the limitations of this research. For future research, it is recommended to conduct field studies involving interviews or direct observations in Islamic schools. Further research could focus on the challenges faced by educators and identify factors that influence the successful implementation of democratic values in learning. Additionally, studies comparing the application of democracy across various Islamic educational institutions could provide deeper insights into the implementation of democratic principles in different contexts.

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